

Robert Dunkel Inn.
West of Milwaukee, Wis.,
Half way to Waukesha, Wis.

Waukesha Co.

HABS No. 28-2

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Photographs
Written Historical and Descriptive Data.
District No. 28.

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey.
Alexander C. Guth, District Officer,
1249 N. Franklin Place, Milwaukee, Wis.

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ROBERT DUNKEL INN
Half Way Between Milwaukee and Waukesha
Waukesha County
Wisconsin

Owner: Robert Behling.

Date of Erection: Early 1840's.

Architect and Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Good.

Number of Stories: Three.

Materials of Construction: Wood.

Other Existing Records: See text.

Additional Data: See following pages.

ROBERT DUNKEL INN

On the main highway (the Bluemound Road) leading out of Milwaukee to the west stands the Robert Dunkel Inn. In the days of the early stage coach lines its situation was about half way between the City of Milwaukee and what was then Prairieville. This latter city is known today as Waukesha. The Inn is still standing on its original site and has been converted into a dwelling. ^{BUILT EARLY 1840'S.} There it is today in all its beauty and charm, a relic of the bygone days of vehicular travel, when the iron horse had not generally put in its appearance. Its colonial lines and dimensions identify it to even the casual observer.

As the "half way house" between Milwaukee and Prairieville (a days' trip apart in days gone by), it was the popular stopping place for travellers between these two cities. Though no records exist today, many stories about the popularity of this Inn are related by old settlers still residing in the vicinity. Here stopped many a law maker on his way to and from the seat of the state government at Madison. Carl Schurz, the eminent statesman, who, after he left this state, became a member of President Hayes' cabinet, is said to have stopped here frequently on his way to and from Watertown, where he made his first home in the country of his adoption.

The Inn is a three story structure. The arrangement remains intact today. The first floor contains an ample hall,

a tap room, a second public room, an oversize dining room and a kitchen. The second floor contains a myriad of smaller rooms used as sleeping compartments. But "nary not" a bath or wash room. And the top floor is taken up with a spacious ballroom.

The construction of the building is typical of the day when it was erected. In each corner may be seen posts projecting into the rooms. These tell the story of the sturdy uprights which were first placed in the construction. All ~~of~~ the girders in the basement for the support of the main portion of the structure are ~~of~~ black walnut. They show plainly that they were squared with an adze. The joists are ~~of~~ oak. Many ~~of the~~ rooms contain the original floors which also show the marks of the adze. With but two small chimneys, heating all of the rooms, especially those on the second and third floors, must have presented "some" problem.

The details at the doorway and of the interior in general all bespeak of much refinement and restraint. The muntins at the windows are so tiny that it is a wonder how they ever withstood the ravages of the elements. The mouldings are free-flowing and most interesting, and are all hand-cut. The entire house has all the earmarks of the better Colonial work found in the seaboard towns. This leads one to believe that it is the work of a craftsman who was trained in the eastern states and then immigrated west to the new northwest, where he pursued his craft as he did in his original home state.

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The date of the building is approximated as
the early 1840's.

William C. Booth
District Officer.

Reviewed 1/36 H.C. Foreman